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VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB

VACAVILLE, CALIFORNIA

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April 2009

President's Message

Happy Easter to all. Can you believe it, April already? This is the time of the year when we are being asked to help with various projects. First off we have the March of Dimes 5 & 10 K walk/run on the 18th of April at Pena Adobe Park. We are looking for 6 VVRC members to assist with the event. The start time is 7:30 AM with a breakfast, t-shirt and finished off with a lunch, (and all free to the helpers). We should be finished by Noon.
We had members attend the M2 BBQ down in Fresno; I understand that everyone had a great time.
Hopefully our guest speaker will confirm this time, if not we'll have an IRLP demonstration and see if we can make contact with Australia.

Anyway hope to see everyone at the meeting Wednesday night the 8th at the Vine Street Firehouse, Board of Director meeting at 7:00 PM, General at 7:30 PM.

See you all Wednesday.

Mike W6MAV

Around the Bands

By Jerry Olive, KD6WKY

It's been a very active month in the HF world with several DXpeditions to places nobody goes to very often. We had two DXpeditions down under, two up above, and a few individuals deciding to radiate from places not often active.

The VK9LA DXpedition was active on all the HF bands for several days from Lord Howe Island near Australia. 16 radio amateurs where active on all the HF bands on SSB, CW, and RTTY. They put out a great signal and managed the traffic well. I worked them on three bands both CW and SSB.

IN THIS ISSUE

Message from the President……1
Around the Bands……1
March Meeting Minutes...NOT!.....2
DX Convention……..2
March of Dimes Free Food……..2
AR Quiz……..2
German AMSAT Team EVE Sigs……..3
Midway Island 2009……..3
A Blast from the Past Ad!.....4
Midway Island Facts……5
Membership Application……..5

I know Tom N6AJR and Jerry KG6TT worked them as well.

This group has a great website with on line log checking. All I had to do was put in my call sign and I could see if I was in their log. Nice.

Now that they are QRT, all I had to do was complete a PDF they provided on their website, email it to them and wait for their QSL card via the Sixth District Incoming QSL Bureau. Pretty efficient bunch of people I'd say.

Another down under DXpedition still QRV as of Sunday evening is the VK9GMW group over on Mellish Reef, not too far away from the VK9LA group actually. They too have a website with on line log checking. If you want to look at it just Google the call sign. You can plug in my call sign if you want to see how it works, I worked them twice on CW.

Now not all DXpeditions are big, highly funded and run like a German railroad. The YJØTXF DXpedition on Aore Island, Vanuatu was run by two guys, Dennis F5VHY (G3MXJ) and Nigel G3TXF and only QRV for a few days.

Dennis and Nigel ran a 1ØØw station with a vertical antenna during their operation and worked mostly CW. I was fortunate enough to work them just as the 17m band was slipping away to the west sometime after 9:00pm local time. After I worked them, they were gone five minutes later.

Two Canadian DXpeditions were QRV this weekend. Cesar VE3LYC was active as VYØA from Fox Island in the most northern part of Eastern Canada near Prince of Wales Island deep inside the Arctic Circle. Cesar was using a 1ØØw station and a vertical antenna as well and says Fox Island at high tide is almost totally submerged so he was working from the high point of the island. He was only active for a few days, but I got him in my log!

The other Canadian DXpedition was the VX8X operation in the Northwest Territory. John Boudveau VE8EV and Wally Rogers VE8DW even had a blog going that you could read to see what they were doing. Now VE land isn't really DX, but the NW Territory is rare, nobody goes there! I listened to Wally work two to three stations a minute this weekend as he curchunked along one after another.

The sun spot cycle may be in the toilet for awhile but if working DX is possible, there are radio amateurs out there ready to try and get them in the log!

March Meeting Minutes

I left the meeting minutes at my office in Fairfield mistakenly. I will provide the minutes at the meeting on Wednesday night.

DX Convention in Visalia

The Annual DX Convention sponsored by the Northern California DX Club will be held this month, April 17, 18 and 19 at the Holiday Inn in Visalia.

I will be attending and well as several other club members. This is really a good convention with plenty of interesting activities to choose from. For more information go to http://www.dxconvention.org

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March of Dimes—Free Food

FREE LUNCH (April 18)

The annual March of Dimes/Walk America/March for Babies will be held at Pena Adobe Park on Saturday, April 18, 2009. For several years, the Vaca Valley Radio Club has assisted in the Walk by providing communication between rest stops and Walk headquarters. We have also provided communications and in some cases, vehicles for patrolling the course looking for and assisting injured or tired Walkers.

If you can help with this event, you should get to Pena Adobe Park by about 7:30 AM. This will give you time to pick up your FREE T-Shirt and have a FREE continental breakfast. The event is usually over by about 11:00 and includes a FREE lunch.

The frequency for the event will be 147.510 MHz simplex. If you don't have a radio, one can probably be provided. Please give Bob Hewitt a call at 448-5665 if you can help.

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB—2009 ELECTED OFFICERS

President: Mike Vieira, W6MAV
Vice President: Open and taking resumes!
Secretary: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Treasurer: Bob Hewitt, W6HEW

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Director: Skip Lawson, AF6HC
Director: Chris Jones, KD7TQO
Director: Antonio Del Rio, N6ZGB
Director: Glen Mitchell KI6CJZ

APPOINTED POSITIONS

Net Control Chairperson: Open
Activities Chairperson: Board of Directors
Newsletter Editor: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Newsletter Publisher & Distributor: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

Amateur Radio Quiz: Stating the Obvious

By H. Ward Silver, N0AX

1) Which state narrows to the smallest distance between two other states before widening again? Where does it do this?

2) Which of the contiguous 48 states extends farthest north?

3) What direction would you drive from Detroit, Michigan to get to the closest Canadian territory?

4) There are two states that have a portion only reachable by way of Canada if travelling by land. One is the answer to Question 2. What is the other state?

5) Which is the southernmost state?

6) Which state extends farthest from south to north?

7) Which state extends farthest from west to east?

8) What are the three Canadian DXCC entities?

9) Which four states meet at Four Corners?

10) Which state has a "thumb"?

11) Which state has a "boot heel"?

12) How many fifth-district states have "panhandles"?

13) If you are at a fixed station in the easternmost part of the easternmost Canadian province, what is your call sign's prefix?

14) How many US call sign districts are bordered by the Great Lakes? How many Canadian provinces?

15) Which is farthest west, the Northwest Territories, VE8, or the Yukon Territory, VY1?

Bonus Question: What state extends farthest to the south that also extends north of Canadian territory?

Answers:

1) Maryland -- at Hancock, MD between West Virginia and Pennsylvania

2) Minnesota -- in the International Boundary Waters area

3) East or southeast to Windsor, Ontario

4) Minnesota (the Northwest Angle) and Washington -- Point Roberts is only reachable by land through British Columbia

5) Hawaii at 19 degrees North

6) Alaska spans approximately 40 degrees of latitude

7) Alaska again -- from the tip of the Aleutian Islands to British Columbia

8) Canada, St Paul Island (CY9) and Sable Island (CY0)

9) Utah, New Mexico, Arizona and Colorado

10) Michigan

11) Missouri

12) Two -- Texas and Oklahoma

13) VO1 -- in Newfoundland

14) 5 US districts (2nd, 3rd [PA], 8th, 9th and 10th) and 1 Canadian district (Ontario)

15) Yukon Territory, VY1

Bonus - California! The northern boundary of California lies at 42 degrees North while the province of Ontario dips a toe into Lake Ontario just south of that line.

German AMSAT Team Transmits, Receives Signals from Venus

On March 25, a group from AMSAT-DL bounced radio signals off the surface of Venus, marking the first time Amateur Radio operators have bounced radio signals off another planet. According to AMSAT-DL President Peter Guelzow, DB2OS, the Earth-Venus-Earth (EVE) transmission is another step in preparing for a mission to Mars. According to an AMSAT-DL press release, the team's transmitter was generating about 6 kW CW on 2.4 GHz.

Guelzow said that signals were sent from a ground control station at the IUZ Sternwarte observatory in Bochum: "After traveling almost 100 million kilometers and a round trip delay of about 5 minutes, they were clearly received as echoes from the surface of Venus. This was the first German success to receive echoes of other planets. In addition, this is the farthest distance crossed by radio amateurs, over 100 times further than echoes from the moon (EME reflections)."

The EVE experiment was repeated on March 26 for several hours with "good echoes" from Venus, Guelzow said. "Morse code was used to transmit the well-known "HI" signature known from the AMSAT OSCAR satellites."

For receiving the EVE reflections, Guelzow said that the team used a fast Fourier transform (FFT) analysis with an integration time of 5 minutes. "After integrating for 2 minutes only, the reflected signals were clearly visible in the display," he said. "Despite the bad weather, signals from Venus could be detected from 1038 UTC on until the planet reached the local horizon."

Guelzow explained that with the EVE reflections, the high power amplifier "has therefore passed this crucial test as a final key component for the planned P5-A Mars mission. By receiving generated echoes from Venus, the ground and command station for the Mars probe has been cleared for operational use and the AMSAT-DL team is now gearing up for building the P5-A space probe. AMSAT-DL wants to show that low-budget interplanetary exploration is possible with its approach."

Development, design and construction of this first German Mars mission have been achieved by AMSAT-DL and its partner organizations, Guelzow explained. "Already a third of the total project costs were performed. More work shall follow during the mission. AMSAT-DL would like to demonstrate that their approaches to low-cost space missions are feasible." -- *Information provided by AMSAT-DL*

Midway Island 2009

Press Release Number 2 March 31, 2009

We are pleased to announce the anticipated dates for the DXpedition are now set for 9 through 19 October. These dates have been selected to allow maximum operation for the eleven days we will on the island and most importantly provide Midway Island over two weekends.

Logistical planning is under way and equipment is being arranged. Plans for six stations to be located in two separate locations are proceeding with two antenna fields feeding these two operating sites. Modes will be CW, SSB and RTTY with at least one station on 20 meters 24 hours a day to provide that new entity to those who need it. A link is now provided showing the radio site at the X on the beach area on the north side of the island where the operating positions will be located.

Editor's Note—Press Release continues on page five.

THE VVRC WELCOMES YOU

The Repeater is Published by the Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143, An ARRL Affiliated Club. Founded 1987, Chartered 1988 General Meetings: 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7:30 PM 420 Vine Street Fire Station.

Wheelchair accessible

Visit the Repeater online courtesy of Bob K6HEW at:
http://users.cwnet.com/hewbob/vvrc
Club repeater in Vacaville:W6VVR 145.470 MHz(-) pl 127.3

The W6VVR net call is Tuesday evenings at 7pm on the club repeater. All are invited to participate in this weekly meeting on the air. 73!

Additional local repeaters
WV6F 224.200(-) WV6F 440.025(+)
W6BRA Repeater 224.540 MHz, PL 118.8 Hz, net call Wednesday evenings at 7pm except for club meeting nights.

The advertisement shown below for Larsen E. Enterprises first appeared in the April 1960 issue of QST Magazine. It's an indication of how Larsen E. Rapp did things back in the good old days. Wouldn't it be nice if our present day suppliers had the same philosophy?

Announcing the formation of

LARSEN E. ENTERPRISES, INC.

"Servicing the amateur from coast to coast"

TO BORROW a slogan from our favorite radio magazine, we are "devoted entirely to amateur radio." We will not sell to anyone who is not a licensed radio amateur, except at list prices. As the authorized dealer for every manufacturer in the world, we stock only the finest equipment in every price range.

You are invited to park your car free in our spacious lot at the rear of the west wing, just off Route 128. If you fly in, avail yourself of the facilities on the landing strip, and our smiling pilot will be pleased to bring you without delay to our heliport on the roof. However you travel, a short escalator ride brings you to our SHACK OF TOMORROW, where the latest in new transmitters and receivers are on display and ready for your personal tests and comparisons. Any normal questions you may have will be cheerfully answered by our college-trained hostesses; sticky questions of a highly technical nature will be referred to the proper Resident Field Engineer. Ask to see the revolutionary QS-59 receiver, which *QST* calls "one of the best-kept secrets of the radio industry" (April, 1959, page 67).

The budget-conscious amateur is invited to use the Family Entrance to our GIVEAWAY SALON, where we feature the finest in slightly-used equipment. Every transmitter, receiver, beam and tower on display in this department has been brought to better-than-new perfection by our graduate engineers, and only factory-authorized parts and test procedures are used for the purpose.

The do-it-yourself amateur will find a wide variety of kits on display in the KIT CABIN in the east wing. We include *free* with each kit purchase the full use of our WONDER WORKSHOP, with tools, free solder, air conditioning and helpful advice by the KIT COUNSELOR. If you don't have the time to assemble the entire kit yourself, one of our engineers will be glad to do it for you, just for the pleasure it gives him. No tipping, please.

When you have made your selection, one of our constant attendants will be pleased to introduce you to our CREDIT CHAIRMAN, who is also president of the local chapter of the Optimist's Club. He will be happy to arrange time payments like you have never seen before.

In the basement the OLD TIMER is in charge of YE PROVERBIAL JUNKE BOX, where the discriminating buyer may purchase *individual parts* for experimentation and replacement. We suggest you telephone first (be our guest — reverse the charges) to insure that we have your component in stock, to avoid disappointment on your part and embarrassment on ours. Sorry, but all JUNKE BOX sales are strictly cash.

No visit would be complete without a stroll through the PRINT SHOPPE. Here you will find exciting authentic reproductions of the rarest QSL cards in the world, many at fairly reasonable prices. Included in the purchase price will be your call and signal report, filled in by our PATIENT PENMAN in an exact duplicate of the original handwriting and ink. These QSL cards are rapidly becoming very popular for decorative and other purposes; they make excellent gifts for "the ham who has everything, almost."

Next month we will tell you about our mail-order department, featuring free Air Express to any point on the globe. In the meantime, if you are in the vicinity, drop in and see us; we think our service will please you.

73,

Larsen E. Rapp
President

Larsen E. Enterprises, Inc., Kippering-on-the-Charles, Mass.

The DXpedition web site www.midway2009.com is fully functional. New additions are a poll to find out what bands and modes are most needed and a Midway 2009 memorabilia store. Follow the links to tell us your Midway DX needs and to add to your DX memorabilia collection.

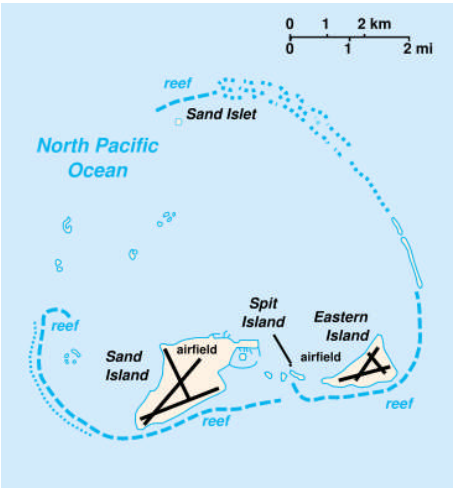
The team is highly experienced and anxious. We invite you to become familiar with some of the team by visiting http://www.midway2009.com/meettheops.html.

Tom N4XP & Dave WB4JTT

Midway Island Facts

Latitude: 28° 12' N.
Longitude: 177° 21' E.

Midway Atoll is an unorganized, unincorporated territory of the United States. It is less than 140 nautical miles (259 km; 161 mi) east of the International Date Line, about 2,800 nautical miles (5,200 km; 3,200 mi) west of San Francisco and 2,200 nautical miles (4,100 km; 2,500 mi) east of Tokyo. It consists of a ring-shaped barrier reef and several sand islets. The two significant pieces of land, Sand Island and Eastern Island, provide habitat for hundreds of thousands of seabirds.



PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB, INC.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

Please Print & Fill in Completely — Dues are delinquent January 1st

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
Street: _____
City: _____Zip: _____
Phone: (_____) _____-_____OK to Publish ?(_____)
License Class: _____ ARRL Member ?(_____)
E-Mail Address_____

FAMILY Member (Spouse or Children)

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)
Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)
Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)

MEMBER Dues ----------$15.00 _____
Each Family Member ---$ 2.00 _____
Student ----------$ 5.00 _____
Repeater/Autopatch donation--- _____
Call/Name badge ---------$10.00 _____
Optional ARRL membership
ARRL dues----------$37.00 _____
ARRL dues (Senior) -----$34.00 _____
Senior is 65 yr or older with one time proof on age.

Total---------- _____
Paid by CASH: ____ Check #_____

Mail to : Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143